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Saddles In The New World

BY ARTHUR WOODWARD

The sixteen tired and stiffened horses that Cortes landed upon the shores of Mexico in the spring of 1519 were the first of these animals that the natives had even seen. The "*Tepustli*," as the iron clad Spaniards were termed by the subjects of Montezuma, awed the Indians, it is true, but it was the horses that struck fear into the hearts of the naked warriors. The saddles upon which the Spanish *adelantados* rode were likewise the first of their kind ever to be landed in the New World. The steel armored saddle (see Fig. 1), with in-curving cantle and high saddle bow which kept the mail clad conquistadores firmly in their seats, was one of the progenitors of the long line of saddles seen today throughout California and the Southwest. The modern rodeo saddle with its swelled fork and somewhat rounded, curving cantle serves the same purpose as did the 16th century war saddle. However, another saddle, that which was developed in far off Iran (Persia) long before the Moorish conquest of Spain, has likewise contributed of its features toward the development of the saddle in North America.

Fig. 1. 16th century Spanish armored horseman riding "*al la estradiota*."



Recently the Museum was presented with a series of saddles from the William Randolph Hearst private collection. Three of them were made in Mexico during the latter part of the 19th and the first decade of the 20th centuries. A fourth is a copy of a 16th century Italian war saddle, and a saddle of Persian origin (Fig. 2) is the fifth.

The light Persian saddle is perhaps the most interesting because it is in effect the prototype of all present day Mexican and American stock saddles, as well as the famous McClellan military saddle (Fig. 3) which was developed by General George B. McClellan for use in the U.S. army shortly after 1860.

In the Persian saddle, one readily discerns the high, slender horn and the curved cantle so familiar in present day stock saddles. This particular saddle (Fig. 2) is light, yet sturdily made. The wood of the tree is covered with a thin layer of birch bark, which in turn is lacquered and painted with gilded floral designs, done in rich gold, red and green. The metal fittings are gilt brass. The pommel is inlaid with strips of bone bearing a familiar, world-wide circle and dot motif. The entire saddle is likewise rimmed with thin bone strips. When in use, a padded, brown velvet covering, somewhat like a close fitting *mochila* (described in *The Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 1949) was fastened over the seat. This quilted pad is ornamented with a tracery of gold thread stitching and the abbreviated saddle skirt is heavily embroidered with a floral pattern in gold and silver thread.

From Persia this type of saddle spread into Turkey, thence to North Africa and on into Europe. Some authors, Dr. J. Roemer,¹ for example, have stated that the Turkish saddle (Fig. 4) was a direct ancestor of the Moorish saddle and, still later, of the Spanish saddle which eventually found its way into Mexico. Said Roemer:

"The only serious complaint made by European soldiers against the Turkish saddle, is the extravagant height of its pommel and cantle. Though no metal is used in its construction, and from its shape it would appear rather fragile it is extremely solid, and is rarely out of order. It was in use long before the Mohammedan epoch and is palpably the parent of the Hungarian saddle, and indeed of many others."

A comparison of the tree of the Turkish saddle

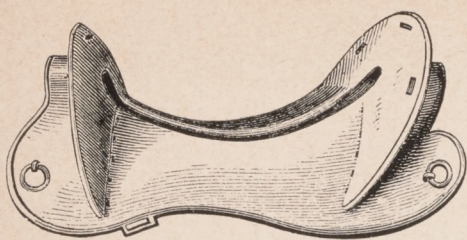


Fig. 3. Tree of McClellan saddle.

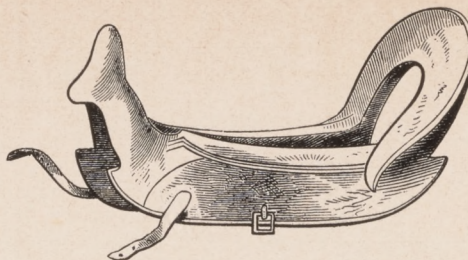


Fig. 4. Tree of Turkish saddle.

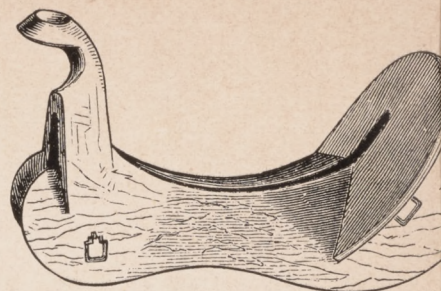


Fig. 5. Tree of Mexican saddle, 1860's.
After Roemer

with that of the Persian indicates clearly the relationship between the two, and this family resemblance is even more pronounced in the tree of the Mexican saddle of the mid-1860's (Fig. 5).

The two basic types of saddles, the one, heavily armored, used in Europe and the lighter Persian-Moorish saddle, brought about two major systems of riding. In Europe, prior to the Moorish invasion of Spain, the mail clad knights rode with long stirrups in a saddle of the type shown in Fig. 1. This style of riding, with the legs extended straight and stiff, caused by the heavy armor, was termed by the Spanish "*a la estradiote* (or *estradiota*)."¹ The latter word is derived from the Greek and means "soldier."² The terms "*a la brida*" and "*a la bridona*" were also used to designate this system of riding.

In North Africa, a certain tribe of mountain dwellers, the Zenete (spelled variously, Jenete, Ginete, Geneta and Jineta) rode the light Turkish type saddle with short stirrups and slightly bended knee. The skill with which these lightly armed horsemen outrode their more heavily equipped Spanish adversaries brought about radical changes in the Spanish saddle and method of riding.

According to Robert M. Denhardt,³

"The school of riding '*a la jineta*' brought into Spain by the Moors and adopted by that country was much more effective for battle than the old method. For riding '*a la jineta*', the saddle was placed well up on the withers and because the stirrups were considerably shorter than for the '*a la brida*' fashion, the rider appeared to be almost kneeling.

"The Moorish saddle was so shaped that when the horseman had his feet in the short stirrups he could not easily be dislodged as his knees were brought up under the swell of the forebow."

Denhardt speaks of the blending of the lighter Persian-Turkish-Moorish style saddle with the heavier European saddle out of which evolved a saddle bearing family resemblances to both parents—retaining the high pommel and cantle of the Moorish saddle, yet armored in front and rear as in the European.

The Spanish finally mastered both styles of riding and, says Denhardt, "the highest praise a gentleman could be given was to say he rode well '*en ambas sillas*' (in both saddles); Cortes and his men rode '*a la jineta*.'"

As the need for the armored war saddle passed, horse accoutrements in Mexico changed considerably. Men began experimenting with new designs. The rise and spread of the cattle industry brought about modifications of the Mexican saddle, particularly with reference to the saddle bow and the horn and pommel. Then, as now, the horn and pommel, in one piece, was made of wood, covered with *pergamino*, or thin, parchment-like rawhide. The saddle tree, or *fuste*, was of pine, ash and walnut, or the tough, hard mesquite.

In the 1840's a Mexican author⁴ stated:

"Anciently the saddles were complicated, misshapen and heavy. Today, on the contrary there are saddles which are mere skeletons and one that is the height of good taste and perfection was conceived by General D. Jose Vicente Miñon and Lt. Col. Angel Carmona

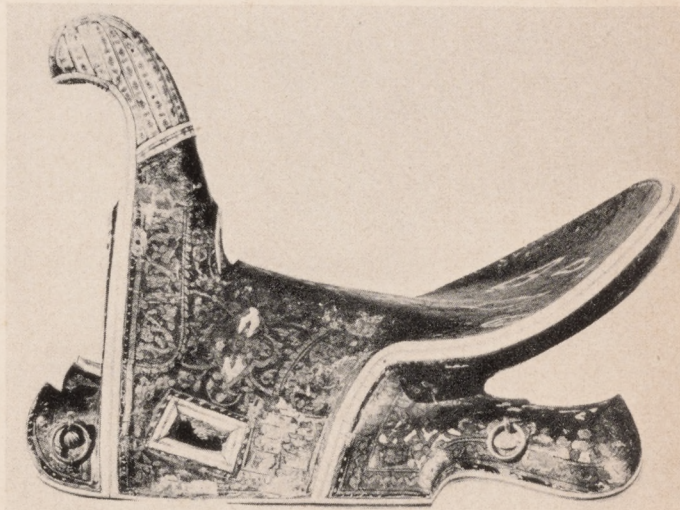


Fig. 2. Tree of Persian saddle, date unknown. Gift of W. R. Hearst.



Fig. 7. California saddle made for Don Antonio Coronel. Museum Coll.

who worked in conjunction with that great craftsman D. Ramon Bernal. Previously the best type saddles came from Leon and Puebla and the trees were from la Griega. Today, those without equal are to be found in the capital."

In Fig. 6 is shown a Mexican horseman of the middle 1840's, from a painting by James Walker, an American artist who was in Mexico at that time. This saddle has the slender horn and small pommel (made of one piece of wood) of the same type as that seen in Fig. 7, which was made in California for Don Antonio Coronel around the same period, or perhaps a trifle later. I cite these two examples of the 1840 period (as well as Fig. 5 of the 1860's) to refute the claim so often put forth by writers that the Mexican-Californian saddles of the early 19th century had short, gross necks and wide, flattened pommels. Nowhere have I found, either in actual specimens of the period mentioned, nor in pictorial representations of horsemen in Mexico

and California, a single heavy horn and pommel, prior to the 1860's.

The saddles shown in Figs. 8 and 9 are excellent examples of the late 19th, and 20th century, modern Mexican saddles. The general form of these saddles, with the horn and pommel ranging from the heavy squat type, used primarily by *vaqueros* in the field, to those with lighter, more delicate shapes, used by *charros* or gentlemen riders on parade, are said to have been the invention of Don Ernesto Icaza but they bear the name Zaldivar, after Don Juan Zaldivar, a Mexican caballero who first introduced them.⁵ Their chief characteristic is the large, rounded, silver-encrusted pommel set upon a thick neck. The pommel (called *cabeza* or *poma*) on the Mexican saddle did not begin to spread and flatten out until the late 1860's and after. They began getting thicker sometime during the 1870's.

In Fig. 8 the face of the horn in repousse silver is six inches in diameter. The central motif is a human skeleton, surrounded by skulls and other dismembered skeletons. The reverse side of the pommel shows a hideous demon surrounded by writhing serpents and the silver side ornaments consist of demons' heads with lizards crawling into the mouths. The cantle is ornamented with nude female witches and a death's head with crossed

Fig. 6. Mexican Gentleman, c. 1840. Oil by James Walker.



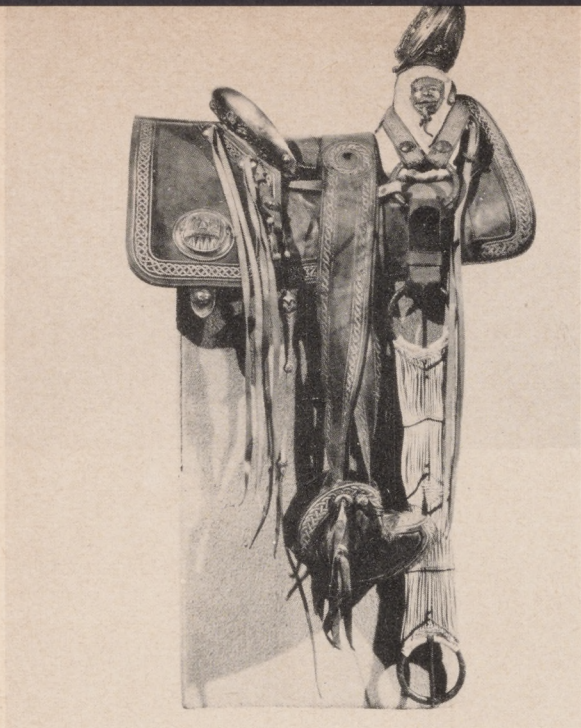


Fig. 8. 19th century Mexican saddle. W. R. Hearst Personal Coll. Gift to the Museum.



Fig. 9. Mexican saddle made by Dionysio Rodriguez, Mexico City, after 1904. W. R. Hearst Personal Coll. Gift to Museum.



Fig. 10. Modern Mexican fuste, or tree made by Manuel Gonzales, Zapotlanejo, Jal. Gift of Museum Association.

bones. The saddle shown in Fig. 9 was made by Dionysio Rodriguez, whose *fusteria*, or saddle shop in Mexico City turned out prize winning saddles for the New Orleans Exposition in 1884-85, the Paris Exposition in 1889, and the St. Louis, Missouri Exposition in 1904. The silver ornaments on the latter saddle, while rich and elaborate, are in better taste and design than on the one bearing the macabre decorations noted above.

These silver laden saddles are the work of professional *fusteros* or saddle makers. For the rank and file of Mexican *vaqueros*, however, their work saddles are made in small towns or upon the *ranchos*. Instead of rich trappings the trees are covered with rawhide and plain leather. The tree shown in Fig. 10, for example, is made of pine and ash by Manuel Gonzales who lives in the little *pueblo* of Zapotlanejo, twenty-five miles east of Guadalajara. It is cleverly pieced together of different pieces of wood and has been heavily varnished. In this state it commands a price of twenty-five pesos, roughly \$3.00 in U.S. currency. Later it will be covered by thin *pergamino*, heavily tooled leather trappings and possibly silver ornaments, by other craftsmen living in Guadalajara or elsewhere.

Fig. 11 illustrates the varying types of saddle horns and pommels in vogue in Mexico during the

latter part of the 19th century, from about 1850 until 1900. Nos. 1-3 are from dated pictures of saddles, 1855-1865. Nos. 4, 5, 6, 9, and 10 are from illustrations made in Mexico by artists Ed Borein and Frederick Remington in 1893 and 1898.

So far as I am aware the Mexican saddle with the huge pommel never reached California. By and large, the cowboy of the United States did not care for the Mexican saddle as it evolved after the 1860's. His stock saddle is patterned after the Mexican saddle of the early 19th century. It is only in recent years that certain western saddle makers have been turning out pseudo-Mexican style saddles for their customers. The complaint about the saddles from the republic south of the border has always been that they fitted horse and rider so poorly. A good saddle must be tailored to fit horse and man alike. Frederick Remington, describing the Mexican saddle, said:⁶

"Their saddle trees are very short and as straight and quite as shapeless as a 'saw buck pack saddle.' The horn is as big as a dinner plate and taken altogether it is inferior to the California tree. It is very hard on the horses' backs, and not at all comfortable for a rider who is not accustomed to it." In another article he remarked:⁷

"A Mexican saddle is a double barrelled affair; it will eat a hole in a horse's spine and a pair of leather breeches at the same time."

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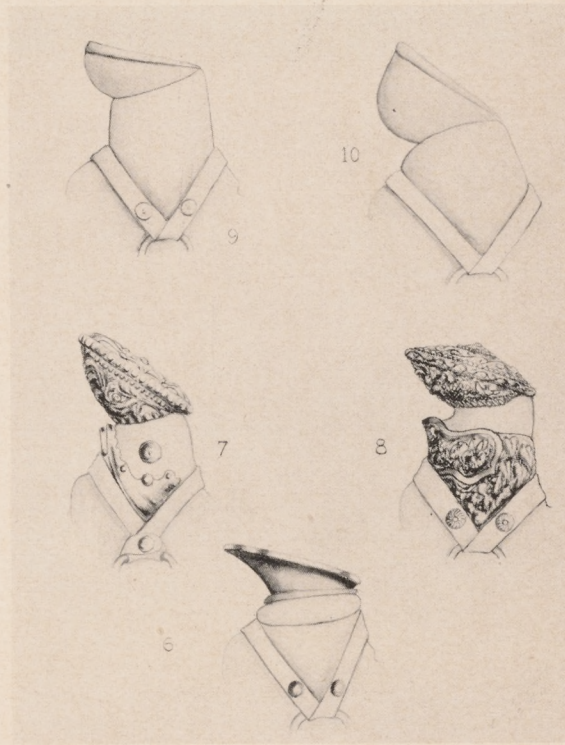
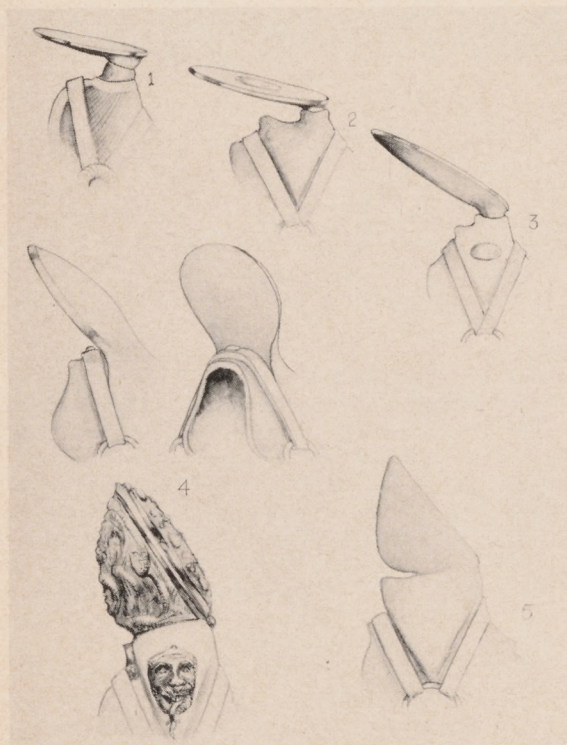


Fig.11. Late 19th century Mexican saddle horns and pommels. Nos. 5, 7 and 8 are in the Museum collection.



1913

Forty Years At Rancho La Brea

Forty years ago—July, 1913—the Los Angeles County Museum began its first excavations for fossils in the Rancho La Brea asphalt deposits. This now world-famous site has yielded thousands of fossil bones of saber-tooth cats, ground sloths, camels, mammoths and other animals which lived in the Los Angeles area 20,000 to 40,000 years ago. Prior to 1913, excavations on a limited scale had been carried on by several other scientific bodies, beginning in 1906 with the University of California. In 1910, excavations by the Southern California Academy of Sciences yielded the first of the fossils to be displayed at the Museum.

In 1913, George Allan Hancock, owner of the

Rancho, granted the County of Los Angeles exclusive rights of excavation. The new County Museum had not yet officially opened its doors to the public at this time and its small staff, headed by Director Frank S. Daggett, was busily engaged in preparing for the November opening. One preparator, Eugene Fischer, who was then completing the last of the mounted skeletons prepared from the material excavated by the Academy, had previously had experience in working in the asphalt deposits. He was sent out to the Rancho to begin the excavations for the Museum, and a number of other workers were added.

Excavations continued for a period of two years



1953

on an extended scale. Over ninety test holes were dug, of which fourteen yielded fossil bones totaling over half a million. The work of excavation was accomplished with pick and shovel, as the bones were found in tar-soaked sandy earth—*asphaltum*—not in liquid tar pools. The prehistoric tar pools had long since been filled with dirt. Some of the most fossiliferous deposits were found under raised mounds of hardened *asphaltum*; the surrounding earth, being softer, had eroded away. Others were discovered upon sinking test holes near small seepages of surface tar. The pits varied in depth from 9 to 41 feet, the best fossil material occurring, usually, below three feet. Diameters of the deposits ranged from 4 to 35 feet. Some of the larger deposits required more than a year's work of excavation, smaller ones were completed in three or four months. As the crew was large sev-

eral excavations were undertaken simultaneously.

Bones were cleaned at the Rancho—put in large metal troughs and boiled in kerosene. They were then boxed and trucked eight miles to the Museum to be sorted, and later catalogued and stored. Many bones were assembled into mounted skeletons now on view in the Hancock Hall of Rancho La Brea Fossils at the Museum (see cover). Some have been exchanged with other scientific institutions. But the great nucleus of the collection is carefully catalogued and stored for reference and study. It has been made the subject of scientific research for many years by many scientists, and still the knowledge to be acquired is not at an end.

September 1915 marks the end of the intensive excavation by the Museum, although exploratory projects were undertaken in 1929 and again in 1949. Many of the pits were filled at the conclu-



Frank S. Daggett, the Museum's first Director, inspecting early excavation at Rancho La Brea.

Pit 9 was a narrow, deep crevice from which the bones of over twenty mammoths and mastodons were taken.



Excavating



Cleaning



Trucking



Sorting

sion of the 1915 work. Several of the most significant sites were left open, allowing tar and water from under the ground to accumulate in them as of old. The bubbling activity of gas in the tar and the entrapment of present-day small creatures affords an idea of the even greater activity which was undoubtedly evident in prehistoric times.

Shortly after the Museum excavations were completed, Mr. Hancock generously offered the Rancho to the County of Los Angeles as a gift in order that the area might be developed as a scientific monument. Some eight years later, the legalities were settled and the 23 acres which now compose Hancock Park came under the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles County Museum. Plans for beautification were soon begun by Dr. Wm. Alanson Bryan, then Director of the Museum. Shrubs and trees were planted; low stone walls were built around the open pits; several groups of life-size sculpture, representing the most significant of the prehistoric creatures, were erected. All of this activity was in full swing and other plans under way when the depression stopped further development in the early 1930's.

In 1940 plans for the Park once more got under way. A study of the plants found as fossils in the pits had been made by this time. Many of the plants were found to be still living today in nearby regions. It was therefore planned to revise the planting at the Park with a view to restoring the area to the conditions prevalent in prehistoric times. A Pit Museum, also, was under consideration, to be built over a partially excavated pit. Before the plans could be carried out, however, the United States was at war and all work at the Park ceased.

Following the war, a resurvey of the entire Park project was made under the direction of the late Dr. Chester Stock, then head of the Section of Earth Sciences at the Museum, and later Chief of the Science Division. Several test holes were sunk in search of further fossiliferous deposits suitable for display *in situ*. Of the few encountered, the largest was located at the northwest end of the Park. Around this an open Observation Station was erected, designed to allow the visitor to descend by a series of landings into an excavation to view the bones of prehistoric animals in place.

Metropolitan Los Angeles had, by this time, grown up around the Park. Visitors to the area had increased, and fencing of the open pits became a necessity. Lighting was installed for the protection of the Park at night; and restrooms were erected. These improvements were effected in 1950. The following year saw the completion of the excavation and preparation of the display of bones in the Observation Station, which was opened to the public in June, 1951.



Early development of Rancho La Brea as Hancock Park, 1933.

Bubbles in the tar show activity of gas. Greater gas activity in the past caused the bones to be jumbled about in the pits.





Extensive landscaping of the west end of the Park was carried out in 1951-52. A large area of open pits was filled in and grading effected in order to establish a rolling meadow of the type undoubtedly present in the Pleistocene epoch. Pipe lines were laid to give the necessary water for upkeep, new paths were made, planting of native shrubs and trees proceeded. In order to develop the meadow, the sculpture was moved from the west to the east end of the Park. Here these reproductions of by-gone life have become the favorite

play-fellows of the many children who visit the area. Eventually all of the sculpture (and more will be added) is to be gathered within the enclosure surrounding the Lake, where it can be viewed in a natural setting.

The five fenced pits which remain open at the west end of the Park are now surrounded with shrubbery which in time will hide the fencing. The natural stream bed has been bridged, and a small cascade established.



Excavation at what is now the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Curzon Street. View looking toward Wilshire. 1914.



Pits today are enclosed with fences. Labels tell the story of the bones excavated at each site. Pit 13 on north side of Park.



Excavation of pits 61 and 67. Looking northwest. 1915.



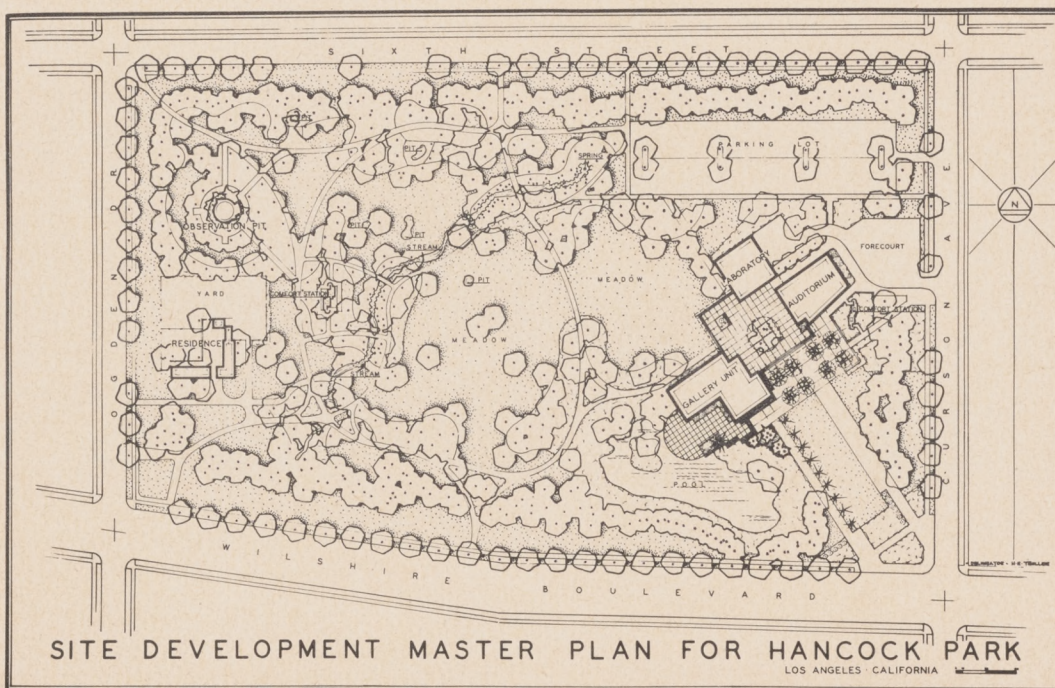
Area of pits 61-67 today. Looking northwest.



Lowermost landing in the Pit Observation Station, showing visitors viewing the bone display in place in the ground.

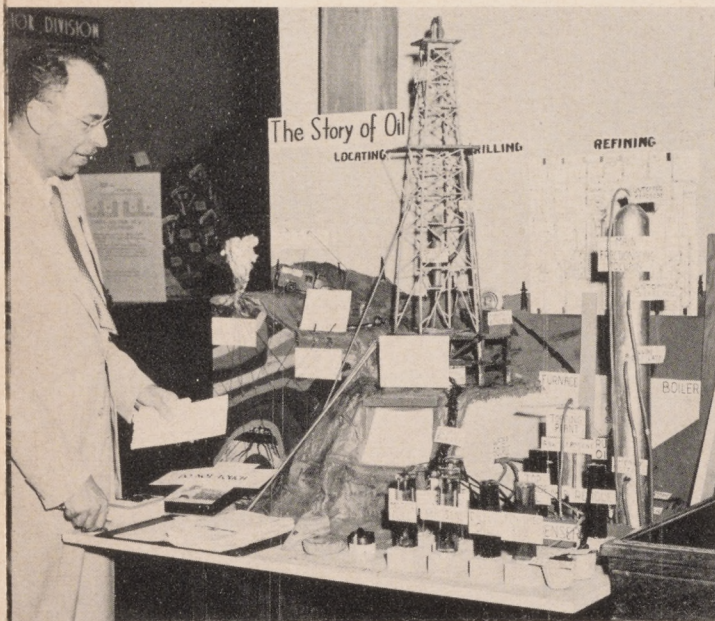
Today the Park is taking shape as a scientific monument. The landscaping of the west end is completed, and plans for developing the east end are under way. These plans include the beautifying of the Lake, the site of the first fossil discovery; the addition of other sculptured animals; and the erection of a Museum in which to display, as mounted skeletons, representative fossils taken from the pits. We look forward, within a few years, to having the complete story of Rancho La Brea presented at Hancock Park—The open pits reproducing the conditions of entrapment, the sculptured animals and native plants portraying the life of the region in prehistoric times, the Observation Station showing the nature of the deposits as discovered and excavated by the scientific world, and the Museum displaying the fossils as mounted skeletons. Thanks to the forethought of the former owner, George Allan Hancock, this small spot in a busy city will remain to remind us of the pre-history of California and the creatures which once made their home here before man set his foot upon our land.

Hildegarde Howard
Chief Curator, Division of Science



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SCIENCE FAIR

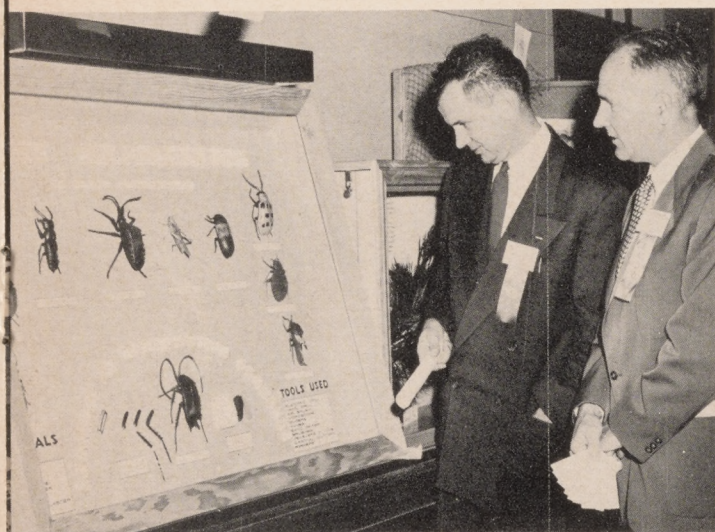
During the judging period Dr. L. Reed Brantley of Occidental College studies the Story of Oil presented by Tom Heric of Hollywood High School.



FROM the ten southern counties of California, young scientists brought their science exhibits to the Second Annual Southern California Science Fair at the Museum April 18 through 23. Over 30,000 people crowded in to see the outstanding work of the junior and senior high school students.

An amazing array of material was presented: steam engines, experiments in nutrition, studies in marine life, crystallography, soilless gardening, chemical warfare, telescopes, television sets, mordant dyes, smog control methods, were only a few of the exhibits. The exhibition was encouraging to the exhibitors and an inspiration to the thousands of young people who viewed it.

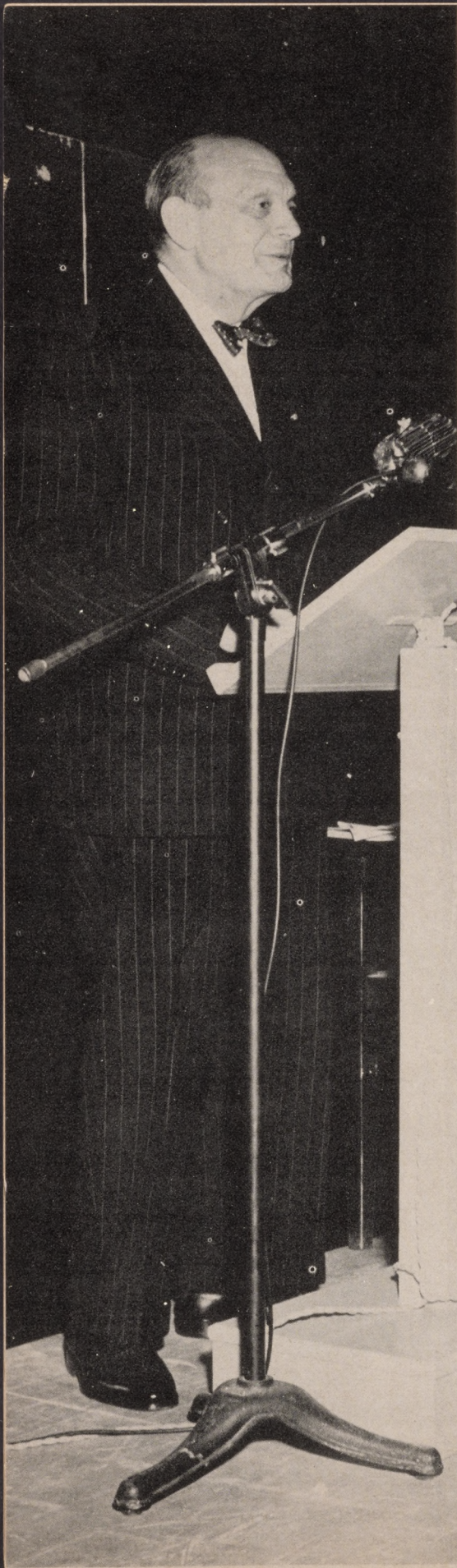
The work shown at the Museum was representative of thousands of projects completed by students in this area. Most of the exhibitors at the Museum were winners in science fairs held



Mr. Kenneth Stager of the Museum and Dr. George W. Beadle of Cal Tech consider the exhibit of Carl Gage of Los Angeles High School.



Miss Gretchen Sibley, co-chairman of the Fair, comforts Daisy who is filled with awe, loneliness and impatience during the long hours of judging.



Dr. C. C. Trillingham, Superintendent of Los Angeles County Schools, congratulates Janice McClung of Emerson Junior High School in Los Angeles who received an honorable mention in the junior division for her exhibit on the "Life of the Orchid."

Jean Delacour welcomes over a thousand exhibitors and their friends and teachers at the preview of the Fair held Friday night, April 17.



in their schools. Each school was permitted to send to the Museum, one exhibit for each four hundred students enrolled at the school.

Outstanding scientists, educators and industrialists were chosen to judge the exhibits at the Museum. Honorable mentions were named in twenty-four categories, and first and second place prizes for both boys and girls were awarded in the junior and senior divisions.

Science fairs were held in many parts of the nation this year. Winners from these area fairs were then sent to the National Fair held May 7 through 9 at Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The two first place senior division winners from Southern California and their teachers were sent to the National Fair. Ann Hauber and her teacher Sister Mary Antonita from the Bishop Conaty Memorial High School of Los Angeles, and Martial Thiebaut and his teacher Mr. James Bailey of Whittier High School were those sent.

The Southern California Science Fair, received with great enthusiasm among school teachers and administrators, parents and students, was started last year at the Museum. While many fairs are held in the east, this is the only one west of the Mississippi. Enthusiasm has travelled to the northern part of the state and a committee from the San Francisco Bay area spent several days observing the work here in preparation for a fair to be organized in San Francisco next year.



Ann Hauber of Bishop Conaty Memorial High School in Los Angeles is shown beside the exhibit which she will take with her to compete in the National Fair at Oak Ridge, Tennessee.



Arlene Hori, Lafayette Junior High School in Los Angeles, shows the plaque awarded to her for winning first place among junior girls with her exhibit, "Man Made Fossils."

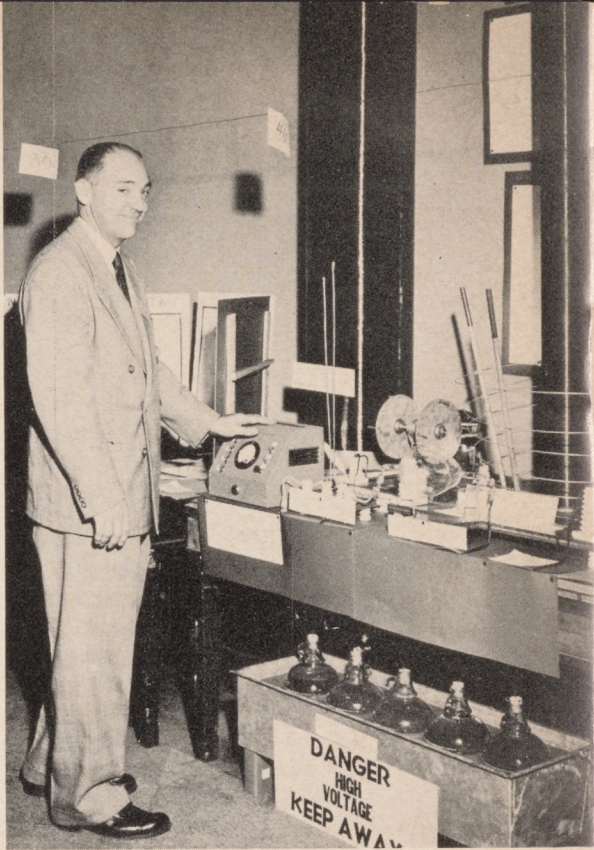
Martial Thiebaut will be sent to Oak Ridge with his excellent exhibit showing his work in astronomy. Martial is from Whittier High School.



Lee Johnson, John Burroughs Junior High School, Los Angeles, demonstrates his exhibit "Progress Through Amateur Radio" which won him first place in the boy's junior division.



Wes Bloom of Banning High School in Wilmington, is shown beside his exhibit of Marine Animals of Southern California.

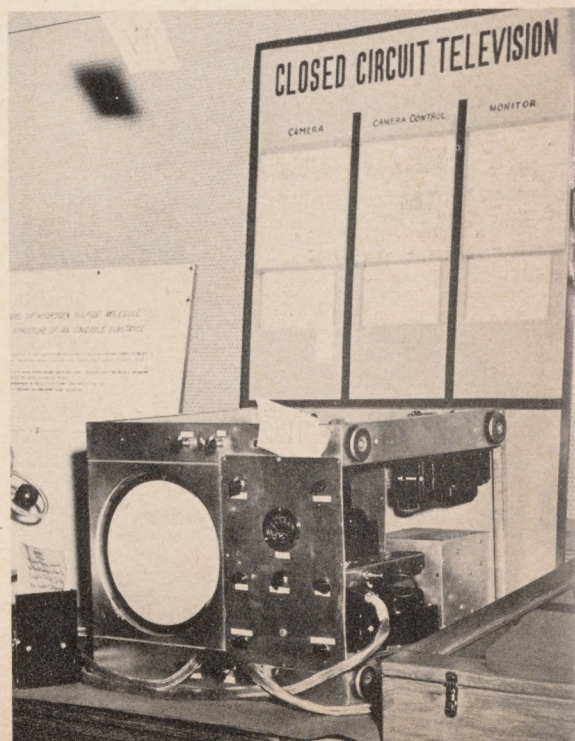


Mr. Robert Rice, chairman of the science department of Berkeley High School, examines one of the intricate exhibits presented in the Junior Division.

Sponsors for the Southern California Fair are the Los Angeles County Museum, American Association of Physics Teachers, California Institute of Technology, California Science Teachers' Association, Los Angeles City Board of Education, Los Angeles County Board of Education, Pacific Southwest Association of Chemistry Teachers, University of California at Los Angeles, University of Southern California and the Los Angeles Times. Representatives from these groups form the Advisory Board of the Fair. This board appointed Gretchen Sibley and Russell J. Smith as co-chairmen of the executive committee of the Fair. Other members of the executive committee were Margaret Q. Davis, of Hamilton High School, L. A.; Mary E. Sowards, of So. Pasadena High School; Calvin R. Bonefiel, of Audubon Junior High, L. A.; and Myron Claxton, of Whittier Union High School. The executive committee handles the organization and work of putting on the Fair.

Gretchen Sibley
Division of Education

Television set exhibited by Thomas Schnerk of Mt. Carmel High School in Los Angeles.



Mexican Milagros

During the long struggle for independence in Mexico the arts, from a professional viewpoint, virtually disappeared together with security, law and order, for most of the Mexican people. Faced by a daily existence without the prospect of earthly aid, these people quite logically turned to their familiar saints; whatever good fortune befell the average individual was ascribed to the benevolent intervention of a favorite image. In common courtesy—and courtesy has always been one of the national virtues of Mexico—the recipient of a favor returns thanks. The thanks of the Mexicans took the form of small paintings, once on copper but for nearly a century on tin, showing the wonderful event and its protagonist offering gratitude to the image of the saintly benefactor.

Thousands of these *milagros*, as these ex-votos are called, have been given to Mexican shrines; there must have been hundreds of nameless artists

making them in the past two hundred years. They are made even today, with planes and cars and other modern hazards shown as part of the incidents. Possibly these unknown painters kept a supply already painted, for their customers to choose the family grouping which best illustrated the case. All that remained to do was the inscription of name, place, date, and the particular impossibility of the cure or rescue which had been performed. Written below the picture the handwriting, spelling and omissions are touchingly naive.

Wretchedly poor as the donors may have been, the little world within the *milagros* is one of constant order, cleanliness and sufficiency, where clothing is new and neat, floors are of tile instead of dirt, and likenesses are replaced by types denoting man, wife, mother and child. The cumulative impression of a number of *milagros*, aside from their narrative quality, is one of simple decency,

The inscription is partly legible: "La Sra Tomasa Reyes habiendo tenido una enfermedad desconocida el dia 15 de nobiembre de '98 grabemiento en peligro de la muerte. Restablecio la saludo . . . de este verdadera imagen . . ." (The lady Tomasa Reyes having had an unknown illness the 15th day of November [18] 98, gravely in danger of death. Restored her health . . . this true Image . . .)



yet even this humble condition often existed only in the minds of the native folk and not in reality.

By mid-19th century the *milagros* began to change in character from that of their European prototypes, which were more ambitious in composition and dramatic action. In Mexico compositions became fixed, landscape and architectural detail were discarded. By the close of the century, human figures were shown in passive adoration or prone upon the deathbed from which they had been raised. In fact beds alone, of all material props, were for some time the only ones to survive in the evolution of the narrative ex-voto into one of devotional symbolism. Beds, obviously, were retained in order to indicate the previous incurable condition of the donor.

Little noticed in the United States, except by such Latin-Americanists as Anita Brenner, Jean Charlot and Nelson Rockefeller, *milagros* are collected by Mexican museums and such notables as Alvarez Bravo, Miguel Covarrubias, Justino Fernandez, Fernandez Ledesma, Roberto Montenegro and Diego Rivera. These historians, writers and

painters are not attracted solely by the naivete of the folk artists, but because they find the basic factors of Mexican culture in their work. For the same reason the Mexican muralists of the past thirty years have bodily incorporated the types, the conventions and the directness of expression of the *milagros*, magnified to heroic proportions, into their earth-shaking frescoes. Timeless, nameless, but integrally national, the *milagros* hold a place in the long sequence of Mexican art from pre-Columbian forms to the living muralists, Charlot, Rivera and Siquieros.

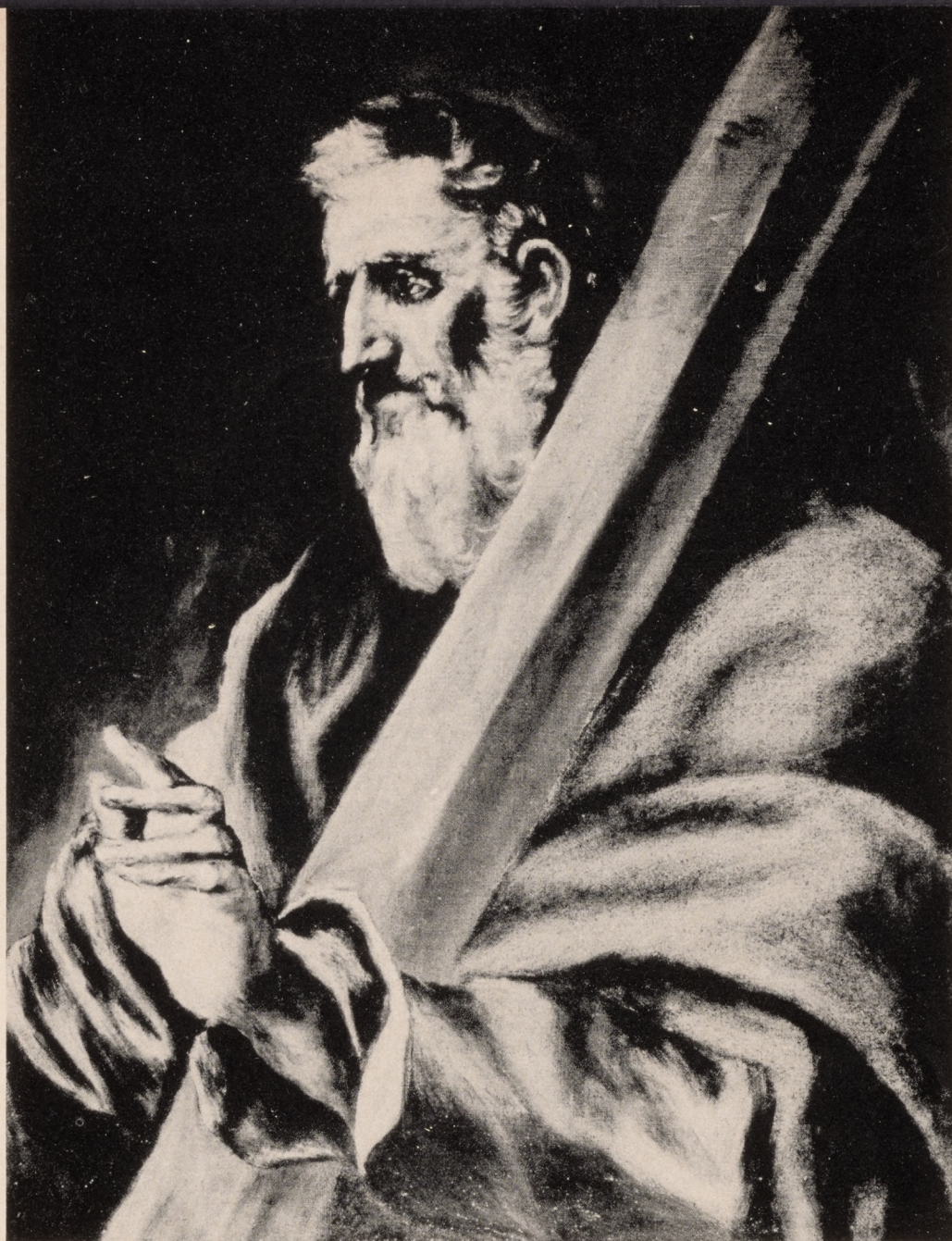
—E. BOYD

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A mother giving thanks to the Santo Nino Perdido, the panel was never inscribed. Both illustrations are from a collection of late 19th century *milagros* lent by John Egan, L.1993.



The museum recently acquired an outstanding work by El Greco, the great Spanish master of the 16th century. The canvas represents the patron saint of Scotland and Russia, the apostle, S. Andrew, recognizable by the cross diagonally placed upon his arm, as he was crucified, according to tradition, on a cross with transverse beams.

The picture comes from the Cathedral of Almadrones, one of the oldest churches in Spain. It is one of a series of eight paintings of apostles by El Greco. The Prado acquired four during the last war. Recently, the Bishop of the church sold three of the remaining four, retaining one for himself. The museum thus had a choice of three pictures and selected the S. Andrew.

The canvas is in an excellent state of preservation, and is signed below the sleeve of the apostle's left arm with the artist's monogram, "DT"—Demenico Theotocopuli.

The painting goes on loan in the near future to be exhibited in "Le Greco et les Venitiens" at Bordeaux, France.

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